

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 07339 141144Z  
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ARA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07  
/086 W

-----141147Z 022377 /14

O 141135Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0551  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 07339

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR AO CG FR  
SUBJ: FRENCH REPLY TO ZAIRIAN ASSISTANCE REQUEST

REF: (A) STATE 56058, (B) BUCHANAN-MELONE TELECON  
MAR 13

1. QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA CHRISTIAN DE LA ROCHERE PHONED US MORNING MARCH 14 TO SAY THAT MOBUTU HAD ASKED GOF TO PROVIDE LIGHT ARMS AND MUNITIONS. THE FRENCH NOW ARE ASSEMBLING THESE AND TRYING TO SETTLE CURRENT (UNSPECIFIED) PROBLEMS OF TRANSPORT TO ZAIRE. THE DECISION ON WHETHER TO MAKE THE SHIPMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IS EXPECTED TODAY. DE LA ROCHERE SAID HE DID NOT HAVE DETAILS ON WHAT HAD BEEN REQUESTED AND NOTED THAT THE DELAY IN MAKING A DECISION WOULD NOT AFFECT THE SPEED OF THE FRENCH RESPONSE SINCE IT WILL TAKE A BIT MORE TIME TO ASSEMBLE THE ARMS AND MUNITIONS IN ANY CASE. REPLYING TO A QUESTION, HE GAVE HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT APPROVAL FOR DELIVERY OF AT LEAST PART OF THE ZAIRIAN REQUEST WOULD BE GRANTED.

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2. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO CONFIRMATION FROM THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN ZAIRE, DE LA ROCHERE SAID THAT "VERY WELL-INFORMED" FRENCH JOURNALISTS HAVE TOLD THE QUAI THAT THE SHABA INVASION IS PART OF THE ZAIRIAN OPPOSITION EFFORT, UNDER GIZENGA'S DIRECTION, TO OVERTHROW MOBUTU. THIS EXPLAINS THE FACT THAT MOBUTU HAS NOT CALLED

FOR A UNSC MEETING, BUT REPORTEDLY INTENDS INSTEAD TO TRY TO NEGOTIATE WITH GIZENGA. THE JOURNALISTS ARE UNABLE TO CONFIRM OR DENY THAT THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS GAVE A GREEN LIGHT TO THE OPERATION. THE INVADING FORCES ARE SAID TO BE WELL-ORGANIZED, REFLECTING THEIR PORTUGUESE TRAINING, AND WELL-EQUIPPED; THEY ALLEGEDLY ARE USING HEAVY AND SOPHISTICATED MATERIEL, INCLUDING ROCKETS.

3. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT THE QUAI HAS RECOMMENDED AN AFFIRMATIVE FRENCH RESPONSE, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. THE DELAY IS CAUSED BY THE NECESSITY FOR AN ELYSEE DECISION AT A MOMENT WHEN THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ADVISORS ARE PREOCCUPIED BY YESTERDAY'S MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND ROUND NEXT SUNDAY.  
GAMMON

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ARMS, SALES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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